(a) whether Government has taken steps to stop illegal remuneration to physicians and healthcare provides in the form of consulting fees and other inducements, being offered by pharma companies to promote their products;

(b) if so the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Certain media reports in the recent past highlighted certain such practices resorted by some of the Pharma companies to promote their products to the medical practitioners. This Department had taken up the matter with the associations and the representatives of Pharmaceuticals companies and emphasized upon them to formulate guidelines/code of ethics and set mechanism for strict enforcement for dealing with the delinquency and for informing the public as to what steps have been taken to remove this perception as highlighted by the print media.

Shortage of fertilizers

581. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while the country has ample stock of Urea, Phosphatic and Potassic fertilizers are in short supply and that we are dependent for these fertilizers on imports, either in raw materials or intermediate products or finished products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The availability of Urea, DAP and MOP in the country has been adequate against the assessed requirement / sales, despite limited resources of Phosphates, no viable resources of Potash and dependency on import of the intermediates like Phosphoric Acid / Sulphuric Acid etc. for indigenous manufacturing of DAP and NPK. The availability of Urea, DAP and MOP is comfortable despite above constraints. There is some tightness in availability of complex fertilizers (NPK) because of low level of indigenous production and also as these can not be imported.

The cumulative requirement, availability and sales of Urea, DAP and MOP during the year 2008-09 (April, 2008 to January, 2009) has been as under:

(figures in lakh metric tonnes)

All India	Product	Requirement	Availability			Sales to state agency/ dealers/ stockiest
			Indigenous	Imports	Total	
	Urea	253.99	177.79	54.08	231.87	226.26
	DAP	88.23	32.29	60.05	92.34	91.98
	MOP	33.00	–	37.16	37.16	35.06
	NPK	84.11	65.69	–	65.69	64.47

Unfair practice of pharma companies

582. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of pharmaceutical companies are marketing different brands based on the same active pharmaceutical ingredients to escape the provisions of drug price control order;

(b) if so, what are the names of the companies which have changed the brand names of the same active Pharmaceuticals ingredients, during the last three years year-wise to avoid monitoring of their sales by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in the matter in public interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The prices of 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO 195) and the formulations based thereon are regulated in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO' 95, which are being administered through the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA).

NPPA has noticed that some manufacturers, without any reasons, change the ingredients of their brands to escape price control. The following formulations of which brand names have been changed by the companies to escape provisions of price control:

1. Cetrizet-D, marketed by M/s Sun Pharmaceuticals Limited.

2. Normet, marketed by M/s Emcure Pharma Ltd.

3. Brakke Suspension, marketed by M/s Franco Indian.

NPPA have requested to Drug Controller General (I) to take action so that this type of misuse is restricted.

Delay in process of price control of essential medicines

583. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a much awaited decision on price control of essential medicines under new pharmaceutical policy got further delayed due to the objection raised by Health Ministry to parts of proposed policy;

(b) if so, whether a Group of Ministers met in May, 2008 to take a final decision on pricing issue but outcome remained inconclusive;

(c) if so, what were the main objections raised by Health Ministry;

(d) to what extent they have been agreed;

(e) by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(f) by when drug price control is to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (f) The Draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy was submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11-1-2007 and decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GOM). GOM has since been constituted and has held four meetings so far on 10.4.2007, 12.9.2007, 30.1.2008 and 30.4.2008. In the meeting held on 30.4.2008, GOM asked the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to sort out the issue of overlapping